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NEW HAMPSHIRE
UNION LEADER
Readers' Choice
2024



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DANIEL WEBSTER



NEW HAMPSHIRE
SUNDAY NEWS
Sunday, June 30, 2024

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Vol. 77, No. 27 Sections

Thanks for Voting us #1 Best Choice for Pools, Patios and Spas



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Readers' Choice special section!**

Thank you to our section sponsor, Blue Dolphin Pools & Spa,
and to all the businesses who supported this project.

Cover

Design: Elyse Thornton

Congratulations to this year's winners

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ACTIVE ACTIVITIES

READERS' CHOICE

19th HOLE

- GOLD
Drumlins at Stonebridge Country Club
- SILVER
Derryfield Country Club

BOWLING ALLEY

- GOLD
Lakeside Lanes
- SILVER
Leda Lanes

GOLF EQUIPMENT RETAILER

- GOLD
Golf & Ski Warehouse
- SILVER
Rockingham Golf Course

GROUP ACTIVITY

- GOLD
Terrapin Tours
- SILVER
Fisher Cats Baseball Game

INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY

- GOLD
Seth Dichard Golf Centers
- SILVER
Funspot

MARINA

- GOLD
Akwa Marina
- SILVER
Seabrook Marina

POWER SPORTS DEALER

- GOLD
MOMS
- SILVER
Naults Powersports

PRIVATE GOLF COURSE

- GOLD
Manchester Country Club
- SILVER
Nashua Country Club

PUBLIC GOLF COURSE

- GOLD
Stonebridge Country Club
- SILVER
Derryfield Country Club

RV DEALER

- GOLD
Rte. 125 RV
- SILVER
Camping World of New Hampshire

WATERCRAFT DEALER

- GOLD
Granite State Dock & Marine
- SILVER
Green's Marine



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- ✓ **SMALLER GROUP SIZES!** For the comfort of our passengers, all multi-night tours are limited to a maximum of 36 passengers (or less!).
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- ✓ **BECAUSE WE APPRECIATE YOUR BUSINESS!** As a special thank you to our top travelers each year, we offer the Turtle Trax Customer Appreciation Program.
- ✓ **WE GIVE BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY!** Our "Give Back" initiatives include a Student Travel Scholarship program, toiletry donation programs, supporting community events, and more.

NEED MORE REASONS? Contact us! We're here to answer your questions and make sure that you have all the information you need to feel confident in your decision to Hop on the Bus with Terrapin Tours!

UPCOMING TOURS

2024 TOURS INCLUDE:

Limited Seats Available on 2024 tours!

- **TOOTSIE at the North Shore Music Theatre** - August 14
- **Three Pines ~ A Louise Penny Inspired Tour** - August 20-21
- **Quilt Week in Lancaster, PA** - September 10-13
- **Best of Michigan Signature Tour** - September 10-22
- **MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET at the NSMT** - September 25
- **Boston for a Day** - September 29
- **Sherbrooke, QC & Foresta Lumina** - September 26-28
- **Fall in the Hudson Valley** - October 14-17
- **Scenic Iceland Signature Tour** - October 28-November 4
- **Gardens Aglow & Boothbay Harbor** - November 24-25
- **Vermont Country Christmas** - December 1-3

2025 TOURS INCLUDE:

- **Springtime in Washington, DC** - March 22-27
- **New York City featuring WICKED** - April 17-19
- **Tour de 'Ville (Nashville & Asheville)** - April 20-May 1
- **Cape Cod & Nantucket Daffodil Festival** - April 25-27
- **Halifax & the Royal Nova Scotia Tattoo** - June 25-30
- **Quebec City Getaway** - July 29-August 1
- **Cooperstown, NY** - September 2-4
- **Bay of Fundy Explorer** - September 6-15
- **Veterans Day in Washington, DC** - November 8-13

MORE TOURS COMING SOON!

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AUTOMOTIVE/MOTORCYCLE

READERS' CHOICE

▶ AUTO BODY

GOLD

Eastern Auto Body

SILVER

German Autowerks LLC

▶ AUTO DETAILING

GOLD

Northeast Detailing

SILVER

In-Depth Auto Detailing

▶ AUTO PARTS

GOLD

Quirk Parts Depot

SILVER

Bow Auto Parts

▶ AUTO SERVICE & REPAIR

GOLD

State Motors Lincoln

SILVER

Ron's Toy Shop

▶ CAR WASH

GOLD

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SILVER

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GOLD

Twisted Cycle

SILVER

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GOLD

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SILVER

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GOLD

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MOMS

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GOLD

Ron's Toy Shop

SILVER

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GOLD

Merchants Automotive

SILVER

Grappone

▶ TIRES DEALER

GOLD

Town Fair Tire

SILVER

John and Sons Tire

▶ TRAILER SALES

GOLD

Ron's Toy Shop

SILVER

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BANKING/FINANCE

READERS' CHOICE

BANK

GOLD

Citizens Bank

SILVER

Bank of New Hampshire

CREDIT UNION

GOLD

Triangle Credit Union

SILVER

St. Mary's Bank

FINANCIAL PLANNER

GOLD

Triangle Financial Group

SILVER

**Craig Johnson,
Citizen's Bank**

MORTGAGE LENDER

GOLD

Triangle Credit Union

SILVER

St. Mary's Bank



DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

Joe Carelli, president of **Citizens Bank** for New Hampshire and Vermont, spoke at a Champions in Action announcement event at Clean Energy NH in Concord earlier this year. Citizens Bank, this year's Gold Winner for Best Bank, partnered with the New Hampshire Union Leader this year for the Champions in Action program.



Thank you for voting us the **GOLD** winner in the Automotive category for Tires in the 2024 Union Leader **Readers' Choice** awards.



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42 Plaistow Rd.
(603) 378-0460

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25 Fox Run Rd.
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192 S. Main St.
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Claremont, NH

367 Washington St.
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BEER & WINE

READERS' CHOICE

▶ CRAFT BEER - RETAILER

GOLD
Berts Beer & Wine
SILVER
The Packie

▶ CRAFT BREWERY

GOLD
603 Brewery & Beer Hall
SILVER
Woodstock Inn Brewery

▶ DISTILLERY/SPIRIT

GOLD
Flag Hill Distillery & Winery
SILVER
Stark Brewery and Distillery

▶ AFTER WORK BEVERAGES

GOLD
Fire and Spice Bistro
SILVER
New England Tap House

▶ VINEYARD/WINERY

GOLD
Sweet Baby Vineyard
SILVER
LaBelle Winery

▶ WINE BAR

GOLD
LaBelle Winery
SILVER
Corks Wine Bar at Bedford Village Inn

▶ WINE SELECTION - RETAILER

GOLD
Angela's Pasta & Cheese Shop
SILVER
New Hampshire Liquor & Wine Outlets



UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

The outdoor patio at **603 Brewery and Beer Hall** will see a lot of patrons this summer. The Londonderry business is this year's Readers' Choice Gold Winner for Best Craft Brewery. According to 603brewery.com, a new promotion being offered is TGI Wednesdays: a weekly Scratch Kitchen and Brewery collaboration that pairs a mystery off-menu item with a beer for \$18.



BALIN BOOKS



Thank You for voting us one of the best bookstores in NH.

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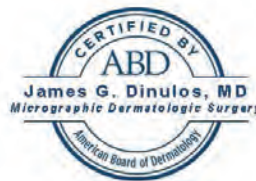
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CHILDREN & TEENS ACTIVITIES/LESSONS

READERS' CHOICE

CHILDREN'S PARTY VENUE

GOLD
SEE Science Center
SILVER
Block Party Social

DANCE STUDIO

GOLD
Dimensions In Dance
SILVER
Dance Visions Network

GYMNASTICS GYM

GOLD
YMCA Allard Center
SILVER
Impact Gymnastics

MARTIAL ARTS

GOLD
Manchester Karate Studio
SILVER
Tiger Black Belt Academy

MINIATURE GOLF

GOLD
Mel's Funway Park
SILVER
Pirates Cove

MUSIC LESSONS

GOLD
Manchester Community Music School
SILVER
Strings and Things

RIDING STABLE

GOLD
Different Drummer Farm
SILVER
Wolf Creek Stables

SPORTS CAMP

GOLD
Camp on Wheels
SILVER
The Granite YMCA

SUMMER CAMP

GOLD
Camp on Wheels
SILVER
Dimensions In Dance



ALLEGRA BOVERMAN/UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

Finn Summers of Amherst gets some help learning to play the bass clarinet from Kylie Elliott of Litchfield during a music camp hosted at the **Manchester Community Music School** in 2023. MCMS is the Gold Winner for Best Music Lessons in this year's Readers' Choice poll.

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CULTURE

READERS' CHOICE

ART GALLERY

GOLD

Currier Museum of Art

SILVER

New England Ski Museum

CASINO

GOLD

The Brook Casino

SILVER

The Lucky Moose

MUSEUM

GOLD

Currier Museum of Art

SILVER

Strawbery Banke Museum

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

GOLD

NH Philharmonic

SILVER

Symphony NH

TATTOO SHOP

GOLD

Blue Heron Tattoo

SILVER

Five Monkeys Tattoo



The Brook, a casino and location for DraftKings Sportsbook, is the Gold Winner in the New Hampshire Union Leader's 2024 Readers' Choice poll for Best Casino. Located in Seabrook, The Brook has casino games, sports betting, multiple dining options, and a live entertainment venue.

MARK BOLTON/
UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

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EDUCATION

READERS' CHOICE

CHARTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

GOLD
Gate City Charter School for the Arts

SILVER
Mill Falls Charter School

CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

GOLD
Arts Academy of New Hampshire

SILVER
Spark Academy

CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

GOLD
Academy for Science and Design

SILVER
Founders Academy

PRIVATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

GOLD
Shaker Road School

SILVER
St. John Regional School

PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOL

GOLD
Trinity High School

SILVER
Bishop Brady

PRIVATE MIDDLE SCHOOL

GOLD
The Derryfield School

SILVER
St. John Regional School

VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

GOLD
Manchester School of Technology

SILVER
The New Hampshire School of Mechanical Trades



MARK BOLTON/UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

Class President Jack Rosenthal, facing, hugs a fellow 2024 graduate at the conclusion of the 54th commencement exercises at **Trinity High School** in Manchester on June 7. Trinity is this year's Gold Winner for Best Private High School in the New Hampshire Union Leader's 2024 Readers' Choice poll.



Thank you for your votes,
that's so sweet!



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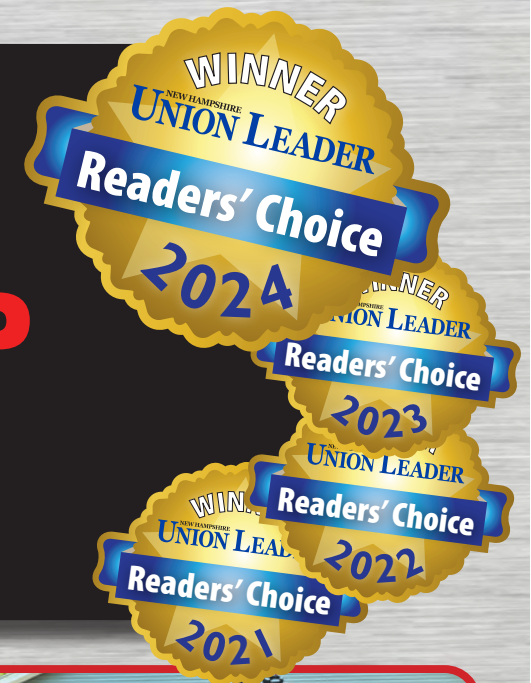
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FAMILY

READERS' CHOICE

ADVENTURE ATTRACTION

GOLD

Cog Railway

SILVER

Gunstock Adventure Park

AMUSEMENT PARK

GOLD

Canobie Lake Park

SILVER

Santa's Village

CAMPGROUND

GOLD

Friendly Beaver Campground

SILVER

Ferndale Acres Campground

FAMILY ATTRACTION

GOLD

Squam Lakes Natural Science Center

SILVER

Canobie Lake Park

WATER PARK

GOLD

Water Country

SILVER

Whale's Tale



The recent heat wave has made a lot of Granite Staters head to water attractions to cool off. **Water Country** in Portsmouth, this year's Readers' Choice Gold Winner for Best Water Park, is about to kick off its 2024 Celebrate America week, July 1-7, with music, promotions, apple pie fried dough, and more.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY WATER COUNTRY

WINNER: Best NH Chef Justin Bernatchez



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Americus Restaurant in
Derry and enjoy mouth
watering cuisine from New
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HEALTH & BEAUTY

READERS' CHOICE

BARBER

GOLD

Dude's Barber Shop

SILVER

Tradewinds Barbershop

DAY SPA

GOLD

Under Your Skin

SILVER

Serendipity Day Spa

HAIR REPLACEMENT

GOLD

New England Associates

SILVER

AJ's Wigs, Hooksett

HAIR SALON

GOLD

The Hair Salon at AJs

SILVER

Shannon Gray Salon

MANICURE & PEDICURE

GOLD

Emery Nail Boutique

SILVER

Black Heart Nail Salon

MASSAGE

GOLD

Under Your Skin

SILVER

Serendipity Day Spa

MED SPA

GOLD

Rewind & Renew Medspa

SILVER

Richskin, LLC

TANNING SALON

GOLD

Soleil Bronze Tanning Spa and Boutique

SILVER

Amazing Tans



You're made of giving back to the community and so are we.

Citizens is honored to be selected as the Gold Winner in the "Best Bank" category for the Union Leader Reader's Choice Awards again in 2024.

Thank you, Union Leader, for your selfless dedication to the community where we live, work and volunteer.

HEALTH CLUBS & GYMS

READERS' CHOICE

BOXING GYM

GOLD
9Round Fitness
SILVER
Fuel

CROSS FIT GYM

GOLD
Dynamic Strength & Conditioning
SILVER
Crossfit Nashua

FITNESS CIRCUIT GYM

GOLD
Dynamic Strength & Conditioning
SILVER
Fuel

GYM

GOLD
The Zoo
SILVER
The Fort - Fortitude & FortCycle

INDOOR CYCLING STUDIO

GOLD
The Fort - Fortitude & FortCycle
SILVER
Granite YMCA

WEIGHT LOSS CLINIC

GOLD
CMC New England Weight Management Institute
SILVER
Southern NH Weight Management

YOGA STUDIO

GOLD
Hot Yoga Manchester
SILVER
Yoga Balance



PHOTO PROVIDED BY GRANITE YMCA

Granite YMCA is the Silver Winner for Best Indoor Cycling Studio in this year's Readers' Choice poll. The Granite YMCA is also known for its Health Intervention Programs, which provide a variety of research-based health programs for New Hampshire seniors.



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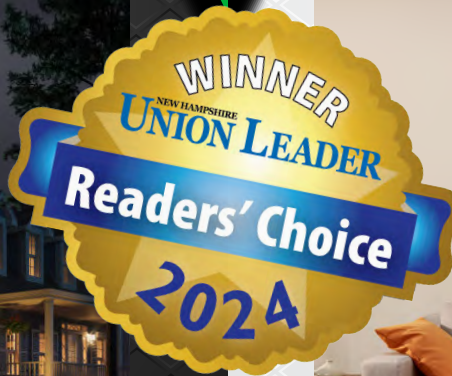


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Bedford Village Inn
SILVER
Snowflake Inn

BUSINESS STAY HOTEL

GOLD
Bedford Village Inn
SILVER
The Common Man Inn & Spa

RESORT GETAWAY

GOLD
Omni Mount Washington Resort
SILVER
Mountain View Grand Resort & Spa

TRAVEL ADVISOR/AGENCY

GOLD
Terrapin Tours
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Family-friendly means serving food the kids will like

■ **Best Family Restaurant:** **Fire and Spice Bistro** created 'Char-Kid-A-Ree' board; **T-Bones** expanded its kids' menu and added healthier options.

By Kathleen D. Bailey
Special to the Union Leader

WHEN KEVIN AND MELANI TAILLON wanted to appeal to younger customers at their Fire and Spice Bistro, they didn't stop with coloring sheets or a children's menu. They created a charcuterie board for kids. "It's their own little fancy board and the children love it," Melani Taillon explained of the selection of meats, cheeses and other goodies.

"We call it the 'Char-Kid-A-Ree board,'" she added.

The Taillons' attention to the smallest customers paid off: Fire and Spice is the Gold Winner in the New Hampshire Union Leader's 2024 Readers' Choice poll for Best Family Restaurant. The T-Bones chain, headquartered in Bedford, is the Silver Winner.

Fire and Spice is a dream a long time coming. The Taillons met in high school. Kevin was already doing restaurant work, in addition to learning to cook from his mother and grandmother. He trained as a chef and worked for other people for 30 years. Melani managed restaurants, and the couple lived in South Carolina, New Mexico and Colorado. Their dream was always to open their own place, Melani said. In the meantime, Kevin developed and marketed his own line of sauces, Naked Hot Sauce.

When Ship to Shore, a Newfields restaurant, closed in 2020, their dream moved closer. The Taillons had eaten at Ship to Shore, and liked the layout. "We liked its 'quaintness.' We chatted with the landlords and signed a



PHOTO PROVIDED BY FIRE AND SPICE BISTRO

The Char-Kid-A-Ree board — a youthful take on the charcuterie board trend — has become a popular addition to the kids' menu at Fire and Spice Bistro in Dover.

lease," Melani recalled.

Then COVID 19 happened.

The Taillons were on their way home from the Fiery Food Show in Albuquerque, New Mexico, when the pandemic happened. Everything shut down. But they already had a lease, Melani recalled, and didn't back down. "Other restaurants were closing, and we bought their equipment," she said, adding, "I don't love the word 'pivot.' But that's what we did."

They opened in July 2020.

From the beginning, the concept was for their diners to feel safe, according to Melani. They wanted to create a safe dining spot for people who are gluten-free or have allergies. She is gluten-free, she explained. "The majority of our menu," she said, "is gluten-free or can be made gluten-free. Our fried chicken is completely gluten-free." Kevin is also allergen-certified, a requirement from when he cooked in Massachusetts.

Otherwise, she describes their



PHOTO PROVIDED BY FIRE AND SPICE BISTRO

The chicken tenders basket offered at Fire and Spice Bistro in Dover comes with fries and dipping sauces.

style as "casual and eclectic. Our food is casual, but has a little bit extra." Though the word "Spice" is in their name and they make use of Kevin's hot sauces, not all their food is spicy, she added.

The Newfields space served them well for several years, but its size prohibited the growth they wanted. They gave their notice at Newfields and began looking for a bigger space. They found it at 47 Washington St., Dover. They were able to double their seating from 52 to 99, she said. They're in talks with their landlord, Chinburg, about creating a private dining room out of an unused brewery space.

Some of their Newfields

customers followed them, and they assembled a new customer base in Dover. When they were in Newfields, the top seller was their fried chicken combo, including sweet yams with marshmallows and cornbread. In Dover the best-sellers are Cajun chicken and waffles, and Korean pulled pork. They've also expanded their pizza options, she said, noting that the new space came equipped with a pizza oven.

The city of Dover has been "terrific" to work with, she said, and the community welcoming. "I was in Hannaford the other day, and a woman came up to me and commented on my 'Fire and Spice' T-shirt."

And the couple enjoys working together. Their responsibilities are divided on paper, with Kevin at the helm in the kitchen and Melani responsible for "everything else." But either one is open to suggestions from their partner.

T-Bones planned for a more sophisticated palate

Tom Boucher is CEO of the Great NH Restaurants chain, which includes T-Bones, Cactus Jack's, The Copper Door and a nonprofit, feednh.org. When he started T-Bones back in the '80s, he wasn't focused on making the restaurant child-friendly.

See **Restaurants**, Page T20

Restaurants

From Page T19

That came later, about 25 years in, when he decided to focus on families. "We now have a large children's menu, more extensive than most," he said. "Most places have macaroni and cheese, hot dogs, chicken fingers. We want to make our kids' meals a little more healthy, with a broader appeal."

To that end, he's developed kids' dishes that are miniatures of the adult

fare. "We have a kids' roast turkey dinner, a kids' sliced sirloin platter," he said. "Children's palates have become more sophisticated over the years." But children can still be picky eaters, and he's happy to swap something out of his dinners. "They may not like butternut squash, so we'll give them extra mashed potatoes," he said.

The focus on children

carries through his other restaurants, including Cactus Jack's, a Southwestern eatery. The Copper Door is a little more sophisticated, he said, but it still has a children's menu.

"And," he said, "kids eat free on school vacation."

For more information, visit fireandspicebistro.com. To learn more about T-bones, visit t-bones.com.

"We have a kids' roast turkey dinner, a kids' sliced sirloin platter. Children's palates have become more sophisticated over the years."

TOM BOUCHER
CEO of Great NH Restaurants



PHOTO PROVIDED BY T-BONES

The newest T-Bones location is in Concord, shown above, and the New Hampshire Union Leader recently reported chain owners, Great NH Restaurants, would like to move the Hudson restaurant into a newer, bigger space in town.

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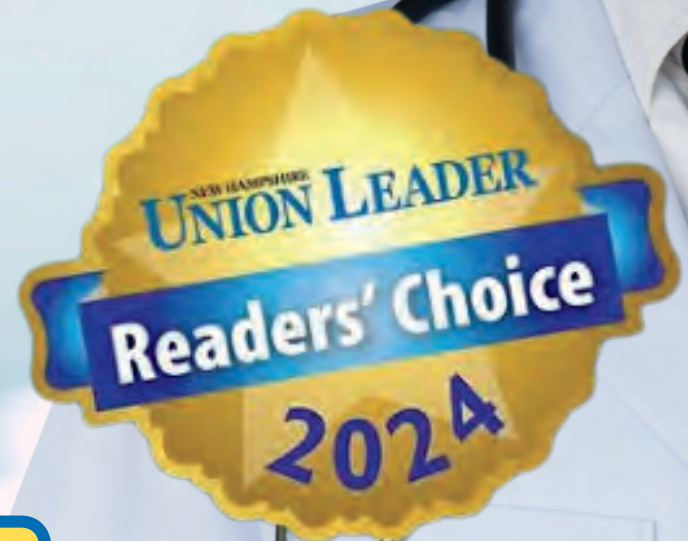
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FOOD/RESTAURANTS

READERS' CHOICE

BAKERY

- GOLD Buckley's Bakery & Cafe
- SILVER Frederick's Pastries

BANQUET/EVENT FACILITY

- GOLD Puritan Backroom
- SILVER LaBelle Winery

BARBECUE

- GOLD KCs Rib Shack
- SILVER Fire and Spice Bistro Dover

BREAKFAST RESTAURANT

- GOLD Tuckers
- SILVER Red Arrow Diner

BURGER

- GOLD Tuckaway Tavern
- SILVER Fire and Spice Bistro

BUSINESS LUNCH

- GOLD Copper Door
- SILVER 110 Grill

BUTCHER SHOP

- GOLD Mr. Steer
- SILVER Tuckaway Tavern

CANDY SHOP

- GOLD Granite State Candy
- SILVER Lickey's and Chewy's

CATERING

- GOLD Fire and Spice Bistro
- SILVER Tidewater Catering



DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

Customers have coffee and some breakfast at the **Red Arrow Diner** on Lowell Street in Manchester. The Red Arrow is this year's Silver Winner for Best Breakfast Restaurant and Gold Winner for Best Late-Night Eats.

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FOOD/RESTAURANTS

READERS' CHOICE

CHICKEN TENDERS

GOLD

Puritan Backroom

SILVER

Goldenrod Restaurant

CHICKEN WINGS

GOLD

Thirsty Moose Tapouse

SILVER

Billy's Sports Bar

CHINESE RESTAURANT

GOLD

Asian Breeze

SILVER

Lilac Blossom

COFFEE SHOP

GOLD

Flight Coffee

SILVER

Union Coffee

DESSERT SPOT

GOLD

Frederick's Pastries

SILVER

Klemm's Bakery

DONUTS

GOLD

Klemm's Bakery

SILVER

New Hampshire Doughnut Co.

FAMILY RESTAURANT

GOLD

Fire and Spice Bistro

SILVER

T-Bones

FARMERS MARKET

GOLD

Candia Farmers Market

SILVER

Bedford Farmers Market

FINE DINING RESTAURANT

GOLD

Bedford Village Inn

SILVER

Villagio Ristorante Italiano



DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

Kathy Hennessy of Bedford picks up fresh greens at the **Bedford Farmers Market** on June 4. In this year's New Hampshire Union Leader's Readers' Choice poll, the Bedford market is the Silver Winner for Best Farmers Market.

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FOOD/RESTAURANTS

READERS' CHOICE

▶ GOURMET GROCERY STORE

GOLD
Angela's Pasta and Cheese Shop
SILVER
Tuscan Marketplace

▶ GREEK RESTAURANT

GOLD
Amphora
SILVER
Fotia Greek Taverna

▶ GROCERY

GOLD
Hannaford
SILVER
Market Basket

▶ HEALTHY FOOD RESTAURANT

GOLD
Pressed Cafe
SILVER
Playa Bowls

▶ ICE CREAM STAND

GOLD
Goldenrod
SILVER
Hayward's Ice Cream

▶ INDIAN RESTAURANT

GOLD
Kashmir
SILVER
Taj India

▶ ITALIAN RESTAURANT

GOLD
Villaggio Ristorante Italiano
SILVER
Fratello's Italian Grille

▶ JAPANESE RESTAURANT

GOLD
Ichiban
SILVER
You You Japanese Bistro

▶ LATE-NIGHT EATS

GOLD
Red Arrow Diner
SILVER
Stumble Inn

▶ MEXICAN RESTAURANT

GOLD
La Carretta
SILVER
Puerta Vallarta

▶ CHEF

GOLD
**Justin Bernatchez
 at LaBelle Winery**
SILVER
**Kevin Taillon
 at Fire and Spice Bistro**

▶ ORGANIC & HEALTH FOODS

GOLD
A Market
SILVER
Concord Co-Op

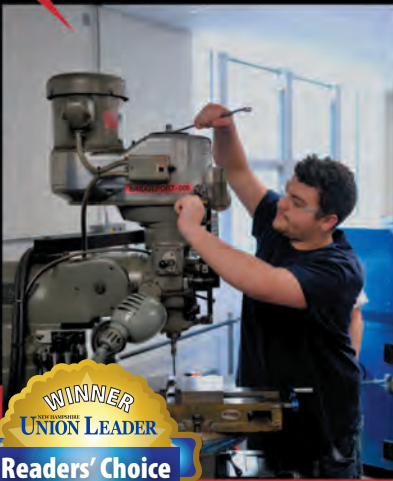
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FOOD/RESTAURANTS

READERS' CHOICE

PIZZA SHOP

- GOLD
900 Degrees Neapolitan Pizzeria
- SILVER
Vintage Pizza

BRUNCH

- GOLD
Fire and Spice Bistro
- SILVER
Tuckers

PUB FOOD

- GOLD
Thirsty Moose Taphouse
- SILVER
New England Tap House

ROMANTIC RESTAURANT

- GOLD
Bedford Village Inn
- SILVER
Buckley's Great Steaks

SANDWICHES & SUBS

- GOLD
Nadeau's
- SILVER
Town Cabin Pub & Deli

SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

- GOLD
Beach Plum
- SILVER
Brown's Lobster Pound

STEAK HOUSE

- GOLD
Tuckaway Tavern
- SILVER
Buckley's Great Steaks

SUSHI

- GOLD
Asian Breeze
- SILVER
Chen's Garden



JENNIFER LORD

Patrons at the **Thirsty Moose Taphouse** in Exeter can enjoy a full-blooming garden surrounding the outdoor patio. The Thirsty Moose is a two-time Gold Winner in this year's Readers' Choice poll: Best Chicken Wings and Best Pub Food.



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MEDICAL

READERS' CHOICE

▮ CANCER CARE

GOLD
CMC Breast Care Center
SILVER
**St. Joseph Hospital
 Cancer Center**

▮ CARDIAC CARE

GOLD
Catholic Medical Center
SILVER
St. Joseph Hospital Cardiology

▮ CHILDBIRTH FACILITY

GOLD
**St. Joseph Hospital -
 Maternal Child Health**
SILVER
Catholic Medical Center

▮ CHIROPRACTOR

GOLD
**Mark Stagnone
 Chiropractic Center**
SILVER
Bedford Chiropractic

▮ DENTIST

GOLD
Hooksett Family Dentistry
SILVER
Vanguard Dental Group

▮ DERMATOLOGIST

GOLD
**Seacoast Dermatology
 New England**
SILVER
Dermatology Associates



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ST. JOSEPH HOSPITAL

St. Joseph Hospital in Nashua was voted a winner in eight different categories in this year's Readers' Choice poll, including Best Hospital. The organization hosts community events throughout the year; for example, shown above is a group photo from a Cancer Survivors Kickball Game in the summer of 2022. This summer, the organization will host its third annual Cancer Survivor Olympics on Aug. 3. Get more details at stjosephhospital.com

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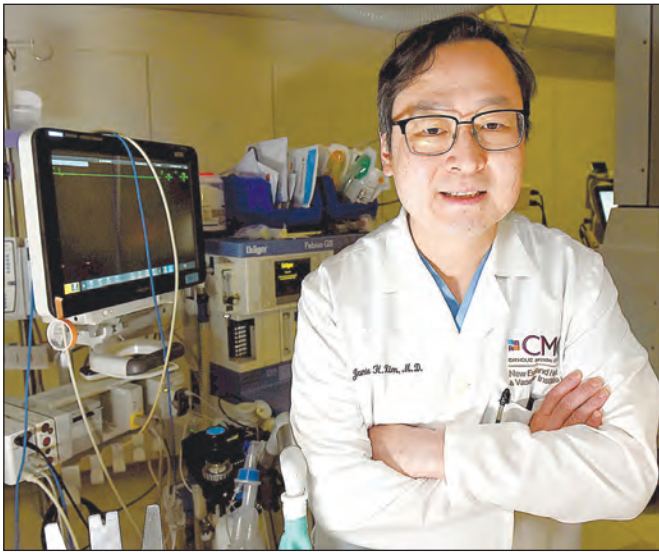
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Dr. Jamie Kim is a cardiologist at **Catholic Medical Center** New England Heart & Vascular Institute in Manchester. CMC earned eight honors in this year's Readers' Choice poll, including Best Cardiac Care.

DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

MEDICAL

READERS' CHOICE

DOCTOR'S OFFICE

GOLD

St. Joseph Hospital
Family Medicine

SILVER

Catholic Medical Center
Primary Care

EMERGENCY CARE

GOLD

St. Joseph Hospital

SILVER

Catholic Medical Center

HOSPITAL

GOLD

St. Joseph Hospital

SILVER

Catholic Medical Center

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

GOLD

Nashua Eye Associates

SILVER

NH Eye Associates

ORTHODONTIST

GOLD

Lindner Dental

SILVER

Mehan and Johnson
Orthodontics

ORTHOPEDIC OFFICE

GOLD

St. Joseph Hospital
Orthopaedics

SILVER

New Hampshire
Orthopaedic Center

PEDIATRIC OFFICE

GOLD

St. Joseph Hospital Pediatrics

SILVER

CMC Bedford Center Internal
Medicine & Pediatrics

PHYSICAL THERAPY CENTER

GOLD

Apple Therapy Services

SILVER

Elliot Physical Therapy

URGENT CARE FACILITY

GOLD

Catholic Medical Center
Urgent Care

SILVER

Elliot Urgent Care



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These doggy daycares give your fur babies a good day

■ **Best Dog Daycare:** **Hollywood Hounds** specializes in elderly and anxious pets; **Bark City** offers conveniences like its downtown location and extended hours.

By Robert Levey
Special to the Union Leader

WHEN YOUR FOUR-LEGGED family members need some time out of the house or a little pampering, you need a reliable and safe — but also fun and caring — place to go. New Hampshire Union Leader readers recommend Hollywood Hounds Pet Spa in Bedford and Bark City in Manchester, this year's Readers' Choice Gold and Silver Winners, respectively, for

Best Dog Daycare.

"We are ecstatic to be receiving this award for the eighth year in a row — it means a lot to us," said Jennifer Turner, owner of Hollywood Hounds in Bedford. "We would like to thank each and every customer who has come through our doors and supported our family business."

The award also excited Ashleigh Blais, co-owner of Bark City in Manchester.

"I was surprised and thrilled

See **Dog daycare**, Page T31



Hollywood Hounds Pet Spa in Bedford was voted a reader favorite in three different categories in this year's New Hampshire Union Leader's Readers' Choice poll: dog boarding, dog daycare and pet grooming.

THOMAS ROY/
UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

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Dog daycare

From Page T30

to receive this award," she said. "We're super excited and very appreciative of everyone that voted for us."

Regarding their success, Blais credits their location, as she noted they are the only dog daycare location in downtown Manchester.

"It's super convenient for a lot of people," she said. "We also have longer hours — 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Monday-Friday — that can accommodate more people's schedules."

Blais also mentioned technology as another key aspect of their success.

"We have live webcams so our clients can watch their pets all day," she said. "Dogs get report cards, too."

According to Turner, the key differentiator in their business is their "small homelike environment."

"We specialize in elderly, anxious, and hospice pets," she explained. "We strive to know each one of our customers. Each

dog and cat are treated like a star."

Turner also credited her staff.

"They work super hard to improve our small business every day," she said. "Jenna Brackett is our groomer on staff, and Zoe Censabella and Ariana Kirk are our daily support staff to help hold and care for the pets that need a little extra help through the process."

As for the motivation behind her work, Blais said her greatest joy is seeing the excitement experienced by the dogs as they enter Bark City.

"It's a good feeling to give owners tired dogs at the end of the day," she said. "We take great pride in our relationships and rapport with pet owners."

Bark City sets itself apart by offering customizable daycare solutions unique to each dog. According to the Bark City website: "Our unique approach to the



DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

See **Dog daycare**, Page T32 Dogs get some exercise and socialization time in the indoor play area at Bark City in Manchester.



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Dog daycare

From Page T31

daycare model allows your dog to determine exactly how they want to spend their day without any types of time-block restrictions, forced interactions with other dogs or other typical characteristics found at other doggy daycares. It's a sense of freedom that gives both our dogs and their owners peace of mind, and something we pride ourselves on offering."

Pet owners are also top of mind for Turner.

"Without our clients and loyal fans, we would not be here," she said.

The Hollywood Hounds website explains: "We are dedicated to small specialized doggy daycare. Dogs are 'grouped' according to their size, age and temperament. We pride ourselves on making sure that no pet is being bullied. Safety is our main priority."

To learn more about Hollywood Hounds or Bark City, visit hollywood-houndsnh.com or barkcitynh.com.

"It's a good feeling to give owners tired dogs at the end of the day. We take pride in our relationships with pet owners."

ASHLEIGH BLAIS
Co-owner of Bark City

PETS

READERS' CHOICE

DOG BOARDING

GOLD

Hollywood Hounds

SILVER

D'Tails Dog Grooming

DOG DAYCARE

GOLD

Hollywood Hounds

SILVER

Bark City Doggy Daycare

DOG TRAINING

GOLD

Lorenzo's Dog Training

SILVER

No Monkey Business

VETERINARIAN

GOLD

Deerfield Veterinary Clinic

SILVER

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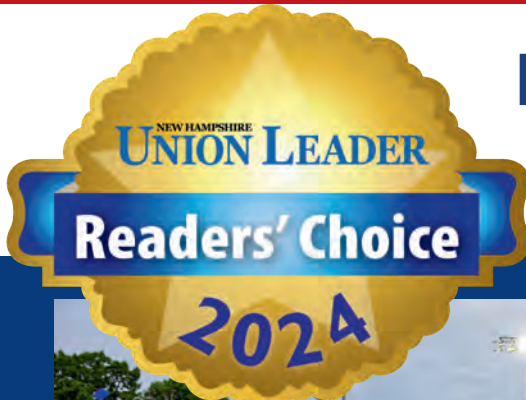
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GOLD

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Plumbing & Electrical**

SILVER

Heritage Home Service

▶ FENCING COMPANY

GOLD

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SILVER

Fences Unlimited

▶ GENERAL CONTRACTOR - REMODELING

GOLD

KV Construction

SILVER

Buster Furmer Construction

▶ GENERATOR COMPANY

GOLD

**A.J. LeBlanc Heating, A/C,
Plumbing & Electrical**

SILVER

NH Generator Installers

▶ GUTTER SERVICE

GOLD

JP Gutters Plus, LLC

SILVER

Got Gutters

▶ HANDYMAN SERVICE

GOLD

Your Handyman, LLC

SILVER

NH Total Home Care

▶ HVAC REPLACEMENT/REPAIR

GOLD

**A.J. LeBlanc Heating, A/C,
Plumbing & Electrical**

SILVER

HVAC Integration

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SILVER

Upstairs Downstairs Interior Design

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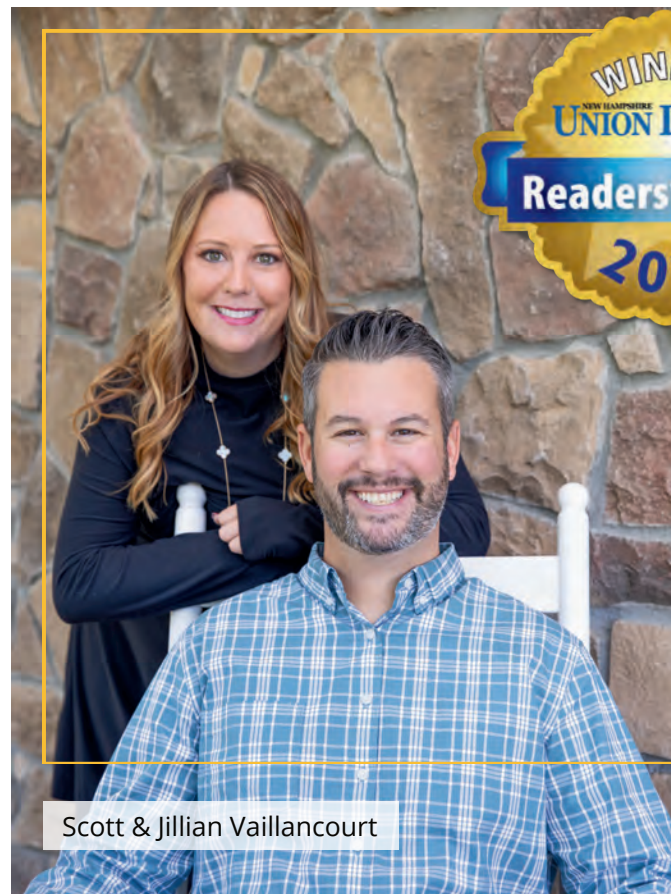
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SILVER

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NH Total Home Care

SILVER

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SILVER

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and Landscaping

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Aubin Ace Hardware

SILVER

Ace Hardware and
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GOLD

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SILVER

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BUILDER

GOLD

Buster Furmer Construction

SILVER

NH Total Home Care

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Eastern Propane

SILVER

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SILVER

Paquette Pools & Spas

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Modern Pest Services

SILVER

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PLUMBER

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A.J. LeBlanc Heating, A/C,
Plumbing & Electrical

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Heritage Home Service

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SILVER
The Gove Group

ROOFING CONTRACTOR

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SILVER
KV Construction

SIDING SERVICES

GOLD
KV Construction
SILVER
Hanover Hill

SOLAR COMPANY

GOLD
SRsolarNH
SILVER
603 Solar

SPAS

GOLD
Blue Dolphin Pools & Spas
SILVER
Paquette Pools & Spas

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The Meetinghouse at Riverfront
- SILVER
John H. Whitaker Place

HOME HEALTH CARE SERVICE

- GOLD
Visiting Angels
- SILVER
Home Health & Hospice

NURSING HOME

- GOLD
Hanover Hill Health Care Center
- SILVER
Bedford Nursing & Rehabilitation Center



JENNIFER LORD

Hanover Hill Health Care Center is this year's Readers' Choice Gold Winner for Best Nursing Home. According to hanoverhill.com: "Our skilled rehabilitation facility and nursing home in Manchester provides sub-acute rehabilitation, nursing care and intermediate long-term care, and a specialized memory care unit in a luxurious 124-bed residence with all the comfort and security of home."

YOUR HEALTH

The New Hampshire Union Leader publishes a "Your Health" section every Tuesday, featuring both local and national health news coverage. Visit unionleader.com to check out the content.



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Cleary Cleaners

SILVER

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Roan Family Funeral Home

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CHILDREN'S CLOTHING STORE

GOLD

Puddlejumpers

SILVER

Lots for Tots



Summertime on Water Street in downtown Exeter means lots of sidewalk shopping. **Puddlejumpers**, this year's Readers' Choice Gold Winner for Best Children's Clothing Store, joins the action with bins of clothes set up under a pop-up covering. The store window shows off the variety of items offered, including children's clothing, accessories, stuffed animals and more.

JENNIFER LORD



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Demers Garden Center

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Corey's Closet

SILVER

Lilise Designer Resale

WOMEN'S BOUTIQUE

GOLD

Lilise Designer Resale

SILVER

Alapage



Runner's Alley has three New Hampshire locations, including the store at left located at 669 Elm St., Manchester. This year's Readers' Choice Gold Winner for Best Sporting Goods Store, Runner's Alley has gear for runners, walkers and all fitness enthusiasts.

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UNION LEADER FILE PHOTO

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Bookstores cultivate a world of community and imagination

■ **Best Bookstore:** **Bookery Manchester** is a destination with books, gifts, a cafe, performances and event space; **Balin Books** in Nashua boasts more than 40,000 titles to please all types of readers.

By Darrell Halen
Special to the Union Leader

LIZ HITCHCOCK, FOUNDER of Bookery Manchester, wants customers to discover “magical” and eye-catching things as they browse her 844 Elm St. bookstore.

There’s the “book chandelier” that hangs near the entrance. A 12-foot tree with fiber optic foliage, designed by a local artist, which stands prominently in the children’s room. A cozy couch near a faux fireplace that is replaced by an aquarium in the summer. Dangling “flying

books” near the ceiling. A bouquet, made from book pages, near an assortment of unique gifts.

“Really, books are this amazing thing that can take you from where you are currently to a different world,” said Hitchcock, who has been in the business about six years. “I wanted to bring that different world to life for a lot of people.”

And a lot of people have responded. Her independent bookstore, which features the Cat Alley Café in the back, was the Gold Winner for Best Bookstore in the New Hampshire Union Leader’s 2024 Readers’ Choice poll.

“We’re super appreciative of the people that voted for us. I hope they come in more often,” said Hitchcock, who added she believed the city’s downtown needed more retail options for customers when she opened. “I’m always surprised — even to this day people come in and say, ‘I didn’t know this even existed.’ And I’m hoping it’s changing the face of downtown Manchester for the better.”

The store, which Hitchcock wanted to be welcoming, cozy and an ideal “date place,” touts itself as a hub for local art, community events, political discussion, and extraordinary imagination.

There is a book club that meets monthly, authors have done book signings, and story times for kids are



The children’s area at Bookery Manchester features a 12-foot tree created by local artist Jeremy Oneal.

See **Bookstore**, Page T48

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Bookstore

From Page T47

held at 11:30 a.m. on Saturdays under the tree. There's even been a comedian, and Hitchcock plans to return musical performances — something that was stopped due to COVID.

First lady Jill Biden was in the store when her husband was running for president, U.S. Sen. Maggie Hassan recently read to children, and Hitchcock is thrilled that the late children's book author and illustrator Tomie dePaola visited the store.

Tables and bookshelves on wheels in the store's middle can be moved to open up space for events.

"The fact that it's such a flexible space, people can use it for just about anything," Hitchcock said. "If you can imagine it, it

can happen."

The store offers gift wrapping, provides a weekly newsletter, and recently launched an educators' appreciation program that provides discounts to teachers, librarians, and home-schooling parents.

Titles range from romance and young adult to science fiction and humor.

"We're not going to have every book. That's not who we are," Hitchcock said. "We will definitely be able to help you find the book that you want. We can curate what you want and what you need right here."

Hitchcock, who worked with Liz Cipriano to create the store, said she wanted the business to carry book-related items and products that customers "in a

pinch" could buy.

In addition to greeting cards and stuffed animals, there are soaps, coffee mugs, book bags, notepads, sunglasses, magnets and more.

Balin Books was purchased from Toadstool Bookshop chain

Balin Books, at 375 Amherst St. in Nashua, was the Silver Winner for Best Bookstore in the Readers' Choice voting.

Manager Michael Joachim said he was thrilled, particularly since the Balin name has only been in the public eye for a couple of years.

The store was previously one of the three Toadstool Bookshop stores. The owners,

See **Bookstore**, Page T50



DARRELL HALEN

The book chandelier located near the entrance to the Bookery is one of several eye-catching features throughout the store.



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Silver Winner for Best Financial Planner (Triangle Financial Group)



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Bookstore

From Page T48

Willard and Holly Williams, moved their Milford store to Nashua in 2019. They sold their Peterborough and Keene stores, retained their Nashua store and renamed it Balin Books about two years ago.

Joachim said the Balin store is one of the largest general interest bookstores in the state. There are more than 40,000 titles to satisfy the varied interests of readers.

"We have a wide assortment of books," said Joachim, adding that its large children's section takes up about a quarter of the 8,000 square-foot

store. "There is a lot of inventory here."

The staff, he said, is friendly and helpful.

"Most of the people here have worked in bookstores for many years, sometimes 15, 20 years," Joachim said. "Customers get greeted, engaged in conversation. If they have a particular interest (the staff) will help them find something, discuss what they like to read."

Book subjects include antiques, test preparation, foreign languages, nutrition, military history, child rearing, crafts, philosophy, home design, holistic healing, wine, foreign

travel, games, and performing arts.

There is eyewear, bookmarks, greeting cards, field guides, globes, atlases, staff recommendations, graphic novels, and blank books.

The store hosts author visits, issues a newsletter, does special orders, offers volume discounts, has a rewards program, and carries books signed by authors — such as Erik Larson's "The Demon of Unrest."

The business supports the Nashua Public Library's annual Nashua Reads program — in which people are invited

to read, discuss and engage in programs around a selected book — by serving as its book sale partner. Copies in the store are sold at a discount, and the store sells copies when the author speaks at the library.

Balin Books has also arranged through publishers to have authors visit the library and it sells copies there during the visits.

"I think we work very hard to be connected to the community," Joachim said. "We have a large inventory here and we change it constantly to reflect what people are looking for."



DARRELL HALEN

The staff at Balin Books in Nashua includes manager Mike Joachim and bookseller Aleya Smith.



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LIVE COMEDY VENUE

GOLD

Palace Theatre

SILVER

Tupelo Music Hall

LIVE THEATER VENUE

GOLD

Palace Theatre

SILVER

Cue Zero Theatre Company

MOVIE THEATER

GOLD

Chunky's Cinema Pub

SILVER

Red River Theatres

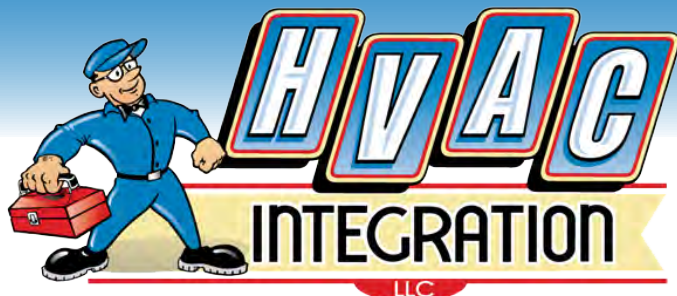


Chunky's Cinema Pub is the Gold Winner for Best Movie Theater in the New Hampshire Union Leader's 2024 Readers' Choice poll. Known for being a dinner-and-a-movie venue, Chunky's is also a destination for field trips, comedy fundraisers and birthday parties. Visit chunkys.com to see what's currently showing.

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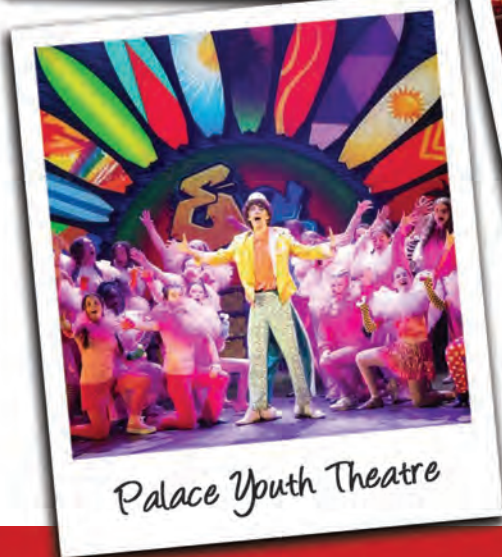
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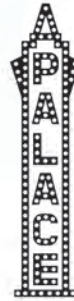
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Bringing untraditional elements to the traditional world of weddings

■ **Best Wedding Planner:** *The Perfect Match* specializes in custom, luxury weddings for couples who might have a few unconditional ideas for their big day.

By **Kaarin L. Clausen**
Special to the Union Leader

ELEGANCE, POISE AND GRACE are all words that can be used to describe Sam Sheehy, owner and lead wedding planner of *The Perfect Match* — Gold Winner in the New Hampshire Union Leader's 2024 Readers' Choice poll for Best Wedding Planner.

With her flair for the creative and a love for planning, down to the most minute details, Sheehy channels her own childhood wedding fantasies into

the perfect execution of dream weddings for couples throughout New England. Described on the company's website as "full-service wedding planning for the untraditional couple," *The Perfect Match* specializes in curating custom, luxury wedding designs with an affinity for the unique and unexpected.

Sheehy never imagined her career would follow this trajectory. While working full time in public relations in Boston, she also took on part-time work for a wedding planner in New Hampshire. After working a few weddings, she thought, "I could

do this on my own." Sheehy took a leap and opened *The Perfect Match* in July of 2021. The business quickly began to grow and by February of 2022, she decided to leave her full-time job in Boston and delve full time into the business of wedding planning. She now can't imagine doing anything else.

"I was always someone who dreamed about her wedding and planned every detail," Sheehy said. "I didn't really know there was an industry for this. I always thought a wedding planner was just for celebrity or high-end couples. And I started to realize that wasn't the case. I definitely consider it my dream job."

After working on her first

See **Perfect Match**, Page T56



The Perfect Match team includes owner Sam Sheehy, center, and her wedding day coordinators, Isabel Price, left, and Lily O'Connor.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE PERFECT MATCH

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Perfect Match

From Page T55

wedding alone, Sheehy quickly discovered that she needed a team to assist her, because she had to be “in a million places at once.” She brought in wedding coordinators Lily O’Connor and Isabel Price, and the trio now hosts 20 weddings annually. Their work was recently featured in both the March and April 2024 issues of British Vogue.

Highlighting the unique

Not long after opening The Perfect Match, Sheehy found that she was most passionate about working with couples whose dream was to tie the knot in a more unconventional manner.

“I realized that I really enjoyed, and felt like I was most helpful to, the couples that were having a more untraditional wedding,” she said. “Maybe they want to get married at a private residence instead of a

venue or are interested in a different type of ceremony than what you’re used to seeing. Perhaps they want to switch up the timetable for the day or have a unique design element. I really enjoy changing it up for every event and bringing something new to the table.”

Sheehy explains that an interesting and uncustomary aspect of modern-day wedding planning is beginning the event preparations well-before engagements have been announced.

“It’s become very popular for couples to start planning their wedding before they’ve even gotten engaged,” she said. “That’s a little untraditional for people, especially for the parents. It’s usually a secret I’m keeping with the couple for a year before the parents are even aware of the engagement. There are a lot of emotions that come with

wedding planning, and being the one person that couples confide in before telling the news to their friends or family is really cool. I actually did the same with my now husband.”

Planning her own special day

In May — just mere weeks ago — Sheehy was able to utilize her talents in the planning of a very special event — her own wedding. She and husband Marcus Gobis selected the Owl’s Nest Resort in Thornton as their venue, and Sheehy’s meticulous attention to detail created an unforgettable event full of whimsy. The design inspiration was colorful and floral, with fun and unique touches, such as a petal toss bar, custom cocktail napkins featuring love notes,



MEGHAN KANNAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Colorful florals were featured both indoors and outdoors at the wedding of The Perfect Match owner Sam Sheehy and her husband Marcus.

See **Perfect Match**, Page T58

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Perfect Match

From Page T56

custom signage, an ice cream truck and Fathead pictures of the couple's golden retriever, Cora.

"The theme was very colorful and floral," said Sheehy. "We used bright pinks and oranges — sunset colors — that were very springlike. Guests commented on how there were flowers everywhere they looked, and that was my goal. I did all of the planning, but we did hire a wedding planner for the last two months before the wedding to make sure those last-minute stressors were not on me."

Sheehy laughed and said she might be biased, but she suggests all couples hire a wedding planner. They aren't only for couples with a high-end budget.

"As weddings have changed in the last decade," Sheehy explained,

"wedding planners have become a lot more necessary than they were for previous generations, when the venue was a lot more hands on and they made sure you were taken care of. Things book so far out now in the wedding industry."

Before meeting with a planner, she also suggests that couples have an idea of their budget, as well as how many guests they'd like to invite. "It's really important to have a concept of that before you sign contracts and get into things you don't really understand," she said.

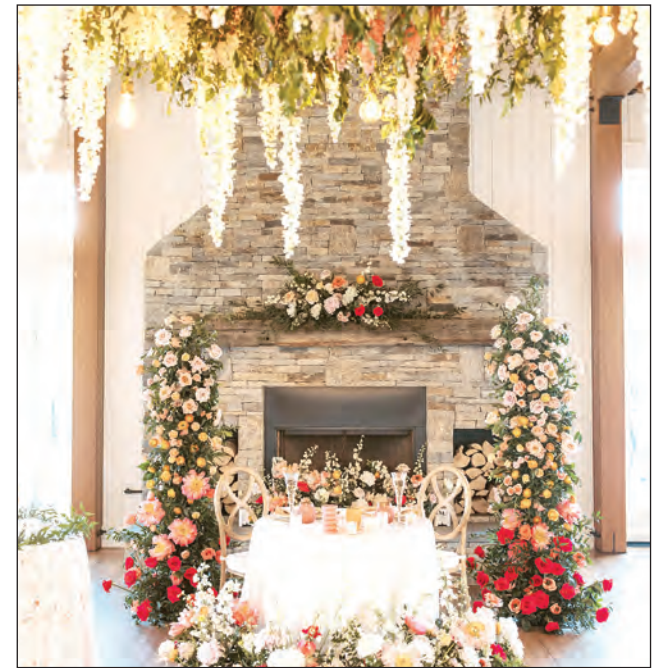
Enjoying the process

The Perfect Match guarantees a one-of-a-kind wedding that reflects the essence of each couple, in the way that they want. Their weddings are custom created to the clients,

their love story and interests. Sheehy prides herself on the personal attention given to each couple — it's what she says sets The Perfect Match apart from other planners.

"We're very involved with our couples and get personally invested in the nitty-gritty," she said. "We know the family dynamics; we know the couple's likes and dislikes. We know their fears related to their wedding day, and we look ahead to see how we can squash any stressors for them. We really thrive on making a connection with each couple and will guide them every step of the way."

For more information on The Perfect Match, visit them on Instagram @theperfectmatchweddings or on their website theperfectmatchweddings.com.



MEGHAN KANNAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Beautiful flower arrangements surround the bride and groom's table at the reception of The Perfect Match owner Sam Sheehy and her husband Marcus at the Owl's Nest Resort in May.



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Cregg-Hyder can plan a wedding – ‘soup to nuts’ – in six weeks

■ **Best Wedding Planner:** Silver Winner **Planned Perfectly** has the connections and experience to orchestrate a quick-turnaround wedding for military couples facing a time crunch.

By **Kaarin L. Clausen**
Special to the Union Leader

DEDICATION TO SERVICE AND COUNTRY has always been present in the life of Leslie Cregg-Hyder, owner of Planned Perfectly — Silver Winner in the New Hampshire Union Leader’s 2024 Reader’s Choice poll for Best Wedding Planner. A native New Englander who grew up in Lowell, Mass., Cregg-Hyder was raised in a military family. Her father was career military, and later in life, she planned her own wedding to a soldier.

Dubbed as an award-winning

wedding planner in The Knot and Wedding Wire, Cregg-Hyder shares her expertise and industry connections with active military members and veterans through her wedding planning services, as well as in conjunction with Brides Across America, a national charitable organization that donates wedding dresses and services to military and first responders.

While the bride is selecting her dress with the help of BAA, Cregg-Hyder exhibits her penchant for planning beautiful weddings with fast turnaround times, often needed by service members. The two services combined result in elegant and

unique events filled with love and promises for the future. The catch is that sometimes they have to be organized in under two months.

“What happens with the military is that if you’re getting sent somewhere, you’re told when you’re leaving and you get an open window,” said Cregg-Hyder. “For example, if you’re going overseas, you’ll receive a six-week window to get your affairs in order, get married and everything else. I get phone calls and have to plan weddings — soup to nuts — in six weeks.”

To help streamline the swift wedding planning of military weddings, Cregg-Hyder encourages the couple to celebrate with a maximum of 40–45 guests and hold the event at a restaurant or similar type of venue. She has an extensive roster



PHOTO PROVIDED BY PLANNED PERFECTLY

Planned Perfectly owner Leslie Cregg-Hyder puts the finishing touches on a guest table.

See **Weddings**, Page T60



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Weddings

From Page T59

of vendors that either provide their services for free or at extremely discounted rates for military weddings. She can then create dream weddings for our nation's heroes.

From events to weddings and back again

Cregg-Hyder never expected to have a career as a wedding planner. While working as an event planner that focused on charity functions and political events, she remembers her supervisor asking if she would plan his niece's wedding. Not wanting to disappoint, she agreed and hosted a smashing event. Despite telling people, "This is not what I do," she was asked to plan wedding after wedding and realized she had a knack for it. The following year, she won Wedding Planner of the Year from OneWed.com. Subsequent accolades were awarded by Wedding Wire, The Knot, and "Best of Boston" for the next seven years. She was on her way.

"I'm self-taught and never went to school for this until later on," said Cregg-Hyder. "When business started picking up, I decided to take a course on event management at Middlesex Community College. Now I sit on their Board of Directors for the hospitality program. Not bad for a girl who never did weddings."

In addition to her successful wedding planning business, Cregg-Hyder also runs a non-profit with her husband, a disabled veteran. The Hidden Battles Foundation was formed in 2017 in memory of her husband's brother who committed suicide in 2012. What was supposed to start as a scholarship foundation quickly evolved into a full-fledged community action program focusing on PTSD, traumatic brain injuries and suicide awareness for first responders and military personnel.

"We consider our first responders to be

See **Weddings**, Page T62



Planned Perfectly clients Min Ju and Jason were married at The Barn at Gibbet Hill in Groton, Mass. In addition to full-service wedding planning, Planned Perfectly also offers assistance with budget development, entertainment, invitations, floral design, lighting, photographers, videographers, gifts and transportation.

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James Tate Cook, Designer Goldsmith is a second generation goldsmith, who started his love of making jewelry at a very young age watching his father create one-of-a-kind hand-carved wax models in his studio in Amherst, NH. His father, Fran, in 1993 then moved into downtown Manchester at 1000 Elm Street and then to 889 Elm Street where he closed his Manchester location to semi-retire and just work out of his Center Harbor store. After working and mentoring with his father for over 14 years, James and his wife, Sarah, decided to open Tates Gallery in New Boston, NH in October 2006. Sarah takes care of the day to day operations and assisting with customers to find the finest diamonds and colored gemstones the world has to offer. James works with each customer, personally, designing each piece of jewelry and then making each piece one by one in his workshop (casting and setting each stone). James works in 14/18k yellow and white gold, Platinum and Sterling Silver.

Tates Gallery carries American-made and local artists, featuring fun jewelry, pottery, wood, hand-blown glass, metal sculptures, paintings and prints. We are becoming known as "the hidden gem in the woods". Come out and see us.



Weddings

From Page T60

police, fire, EMT, correction officers, trauma and medical staff, active military and veterans," said Cregg-Hyder. "We do art, cooking, hiking, kayaking, horseback riding, community events and more. There are 14 people on the staff, and no one gets paid. We also have 42 active volunteers."

Between her weddings and events/programs for Hidden Battles, she works on over 100 events per year. Her enthusiasm, dedication and personal attention are what set her apart from other wedding planners. It's also important to her that the "vibe" is there between her and each couple.

A wedding for everyone

Cregg-Hyder believes she stands out as a wedding planner because she will take any type of client, regardless of budget. She charges by the hour, and regardless of what couples can afford, she will always give a hundred percent of herself. Her specialty is making her clients feel relaxed and comfortable dur-

ing the planning process with her down-to-earth attitude.

"Whether you have a million dollars to spend on a wedding or ten thousand dollars, you are getting all of me," she said. "I invest myself in the lives of my clients because I'm running the show. I have to be in their heads, and as a result, they feel very comfortable around me. I tell them we're on this journey together, and they place their trust in me."

Cregg-Hyder has hosted weddings throughout New England, from the Newport mansions in Rhode Island to a quaint reading room in York, Maine, to the historic Fairmont Copley Plaza in Boston.

"My favorite time of year for weddings is the fall because it's quintessential New England," she said. "I think it's prime — the colors, the weather, the smells — I just love it. I really enjoy planning lake weddings or those held in a Victorian-style venue — and my favorite are the small, intimate events. I always say, 'Less is more.'"

Regardless of budget, location or time of year, Cregg-Hyder always gives her clients the wedding of their dreams.

"I try to make it so my couples don't have to think of anything on the day of their wedding, and they just get to enjoy it," she said. "I want to hear that it was the best day of their lives."

Advice for newly engaged couples Cregg-Hyder is happy to work with clients no matter the stage of their wedding planning. When asked about advice she would give to newly engaged couples, she states, "Never think that a wedding planner is out of reach or out of your pricing category. There's a planner for everyone. Hire a professional. That's what we're here for. We have so many resources and deals to pass on to our clients."

Smiling, she said, "I will make it happen for you."

For more information on Planned Perfectly, visit them on Instagram @plannedperfectlylowell or their website plannedperfectly.net.



ALLISON DASH

Planned Perfectly clients Raleigh and Doug celebrated a coastal wedding in York Harbor, Maine. Below is a collage of wedding elements showing their coastal theme.







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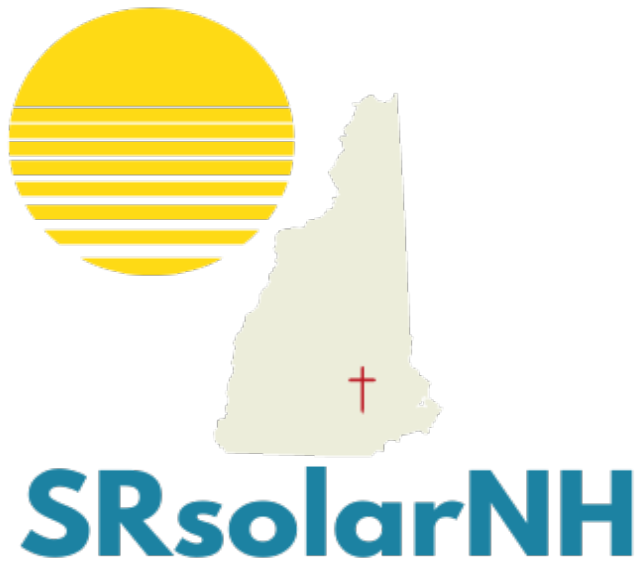
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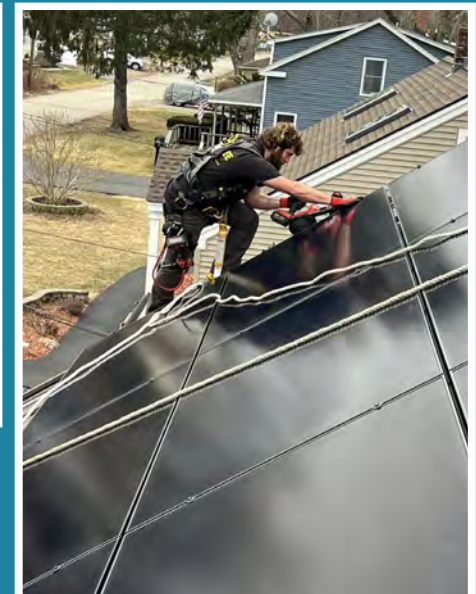
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